Research capability building in primary / community care staff: lessons learned
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Primary care researcher bursary scheme 2010-2013

Aim: to support the development of a research idea for submission to a NIHR funding stream

Support provided
Funds to cover clinical backfill
Mentorship from the Research Office
Links forged with appropriate academic partners

Awardee professional backgrounds
Clinical psychology
General practice
Specialist physiotherapy
Pharmacy
Health visiting

Progress of awards

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Tier 3</td>
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Topic areas
Obesity management
Learning difficulties
Disorders of consciousness
Asylum seekers and refugees

Achievements
3 NIHR submissions
Publication of a systematic review
Support to complete NIHR Clinical Research MSc and a CLAHRC fellowship
Development of a patent

Primary care researcher bursary scheme redesign 2015

Feedback-barriers to completion

- limited managerial buy in
- pressures of service delivery took precedence
- lack of staff to provide clinical backfill

Overcoming barriers

- engagement with senior management- highlighting benefits of research
- engagement with immediate manager/service lead
- ensure a contract signed by manager to protect awardee’s time for research

Anticipated benefits of redesign

Individual:
- Develop research skills
- Refine research question relevant to clinical practice
- Access academic team and mentor

Employer:
- Staff development
- Potential to attract research income
- Build ‘home-grown’ research portfolio

Research Office:
- Meet core aims of strategy:
  - developing people
  - developing research proposals

Literature review to inform the redesign

Highlighted that the existing scheme provided much of the support and mentorship discussed in the literature.

The review prompted us to clarify the aims and expected outcomes of the bursary for individuals, employers and the Research Office.

We identified successful strategies which adopted a graded approach to support.

Primary care researcher bursary scheme 2016- present

Tier 1
Acquire skills
Attend course e.g. Research Methods module of MSc Clinical Research (12 days); mentorship from Development team.

Tier 2
Develop skills
3 – 6 months’ one day per week secondment to the Research Office to develop reviewing and analytical skills; mentorship from Development team.

Tier 3
Apply skills
Secondment 1 day/week for up to 1 year to a UEA research team and academic mentor.

Now
One tier 2 award in progress- a practice nurse is carrying out a literature review
Capacity to offer one bursary of each tier per year

Future
Continue to engage with HCPs
Continue to advertise
Re-evaluate scheme

Comments from awardees

The bursary experience was exactly what I needed to allow me to turn the theory of my Masters degree learning into practical research activity.

It was the first show of confidence I received that allowed me to pursue my research project. It funded a trip to Cardiff to meet a lead researcher in a small field and from then my project has blossomed. It was the touch paper leading to an explosion of ideas and contacts that have really made things happen and turn an idea into action.

Take part in research

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